

care is to prevent injuries and support patients and clients in their rehabilitation efforts to regain function as quickly and safely as possible.

Athletic trainers pass a national certifying exam. In most of the 46 states where they are licensed or otherwise regulated, the national certification is required for licensure. Athletic trainers maintain this certification with required continuing education. They work under a medical scope of practice, and adhere to a national code of ethics.

I strongly support the vital role athletic trainers play in our health care system. I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing this important group of health professionals.

TRIBUTE TO DENNIS L. THOMPSON

HON. KEVIN MCCARTHY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Mr. MCCARTHY of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a community leader, Mr. Dennis L. Thompson, on his retirement after 36 years of service to the people of Kern County, California, most recently as Fire Chief of Kern County & Director of Emergency Services.

Chief Thompson began serving Kern County, which I represent, as a seasonal firefighter in 1970 at Station 55 (Mettler). On his first assignment, he burned both of his ears while containing a standing grain fire and although that experience made him question what he was doing fighting fires, he stuck with it. In 1973, Thompson became a full-time firefighter and began his training at Station 44 (Southgate). When he started firefighting, he drove vintage military surplus vehicles from the World War II and Korean War eras that were converted into fire trucks that were older than he was. Thompson also joined the ranks of the "Smoke Eaters" as firefighters back then were called because regulations did not require a breathing apparatus. "Thankfully", as Thompson says, departmental and state regulations were changed.

In 1975, Thompson started his full-time career in the Engineer position in Mettler, and in 1978, he was promoted to Captain for the Randsburg, Ridgecrest and Lebec areas. In 1981, Thompson suffered an on-the-job injury, while he was recouping, he returned to California State University, Bakersfield (CSUB) to complete a 4-year degree. He returned to duty at Station 56 (Lebec) and graduated in 1983 with a Bachelor of Arts in Public Administration with honors. Thompson became Acting Battalion Chief in 1984 for Battalion 7, which covered northeast Kern County including the Lake Isabella and Ridgecrest areas. In 1985, he became Battalion Chief and Chief Training Officer for Battalion 2 and Battalion 5, which included southern and western Kern County. In 1986, Thompson completed his Master's degree in Public Administration from CSUB. In 1994, Thompson became the Deputy Fire Chief and oversaw Operations, Finance and Administration. In 2002, Thompson became a Chief Deputy at the Department, an Assistant Department Head.

In 2003, Thompson became Kern County's 10th Fire Chief and Director of Emergency Services. Serving as Fire Chief for six years,

Thompson oversaw the completion of many significant projects. Thompson reinstated Battalion 5 in August 2007 and made sure that Station 18 in Stallion Springs was open permanently, rather than seasonally for fire season. Thompson also increased minimum staffing levels from 2 to 3 person stations in all but one station. After 4 years of no equipment purchases, Thompson worked to acquire \$38.8 million in replacement apparatus and equipment to fulfill the needs of Kern County Fire Department. The capstone of Thompson's career was overseeing, from start to finish, the completion of the Emergency Operations Center that made Kern County's operational area preparedness capability state-of-the-art and viable for the future.

As someone who personally knows our local firefighting community well—my uncle previously held the post of Kern County Fire Chief, my father was an assistant Fire Chief for the City of Bakersfield, and during college I was a seasonal firefighter for the County—I am grateful for the service and leadership that Chief Thompson has given to the people of Kern County. I wish him well in his retirement, and I know he is looking forward to spending more time with his wife, Mary Jo, and their family.

HONORING AMERICA'S ZOO: THE PHILADELPHIA ZOO CELEBRATES ITS 150TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. CHAKA FATTAH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Mr. FATTAH. Madam Speaker, I join with fellow members of the Philadelphia delegation in recognizing a milestone that is approaching for a Philadelphia institution that has brought joy and wonder to millions of the young and young at heart who have entered its storied gates while it provides a platform for education, conservation and world changing scientific research.

On March 21, 1859, Dr. William Camac, a legendary Philadelphia physician, led a concerned community of citizens, educators and scientists to charter the Zoological Society of Philadelphia—America's First Zoo—and house it on a bucolic, 44-acre property in Fairmount Park along the West Bank of the Schuylkill River.

Over the past century and a half, the Philadelphia Zoo has emerged as a national and global treasure. The Zoo is recognized as one of Philadelphia's most cherished, enduring and significant educational, scientific and conservation institutions and cultural attractions.

The Philadelphia Zoo was the site for breakthrough research that led to the award of the 1976 Nobel Prize for Medicine. From its inception, the Zoo has acted consistently and successfully to protect, promote, and preserve through its myriad research and curatorial activities numerous rare and endangered wildlife.

It is a venerable institution that has remained ever fresh and vital, constantly opening new and groundbreaking exhibits, acquiring and exhibiting exotic wildlife and pioneering conservation efforts that are the marvel of the zoological world. The Philadelphia Zoo has welcomed more than 100 million visitors—including millions of school children from

the greater Philadelphia community over generations—since its landmark gates opened to the public.

Now, 150 years young, the Philadelphia Zoo embarks upon the celebration of its sesquicentennial — an achievement of historic proportions for Philadelphia, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the nation and the world conservation community. In fact March 21, 2009, has been officially designated in my home town as Philadelphia Zoo Day.

As the Congressman who is honored to include America's First Zoo within my constituency, and as someone who has enjoyed numerous visits as a child, a father and a caregiver, I congratulate the Philadelphia Zoo and extend best wishes for continued success upon the occasion of its sesquicentennial.

A FINAL TRIBUTE TO LT. MICHAEL J. RENAULT

HON. C.W. BILL YOUNG

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 5, 2009

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Madam Speaker, The City of Largo I have the privilege to represent paid tribute to one of their fallen police officers Saturday, when they laid to rest Lt. Michael J. Renault who died too early at the age of 37.

The love and respect the community had for Mike was evident as hundreds of his family, friends, neighbors and fellow officers turned out to honor his life and his valiant eight month battle against stomach cancer. They all recounted what a devoted family man Mike was as he and his wife Jennifer had three beautiful children—Hunter, Luke and Hannah.

Beverly and I had the opportunity to spend considerable time with Mike and his family these past few months and know that his wife and children were the center of his life. They were a source of great strength to him during his battle with an aggressive form of cancer.

We also know of the deep respect his fellow law enforcement officers in Largo and throughout the area had for Mike. Largo Police Chief Lester Aradi summed it up nicely in his eulogy Saturday saying, "The way he led and the values he taught will long live on with those he mentored on the force."

Mike's parents Rev. James and Judy Renault said Mike knew early on that he wanted to be a law enforcement officer. In fact, at 16 he chased down a thief who robbed the store where he worked. He joined the Largo Police Department soon after his graduation from college and moved up through the ranks quickly during his 16 years on the force and ultimately was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant. He earned the Medal of Valor for saving the life of a suicidal man. More importantly, he earned the friendship, the trust and the abiding respect of those he served with.

Madam Speaker, following my remarks, I would like to include an article by Stephanie Hayes of The St. Petersburg Times entitled "Largo officer was tough man with soft heart" so that my colleagues can learn more about the special man that Beverly and I came to know.

Mike was a caring, compassionate and courageous man who fought valiantly until his final breath. He had life's priorities in order—